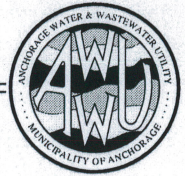




# Municipality of Anchorage



## General Manager's Office

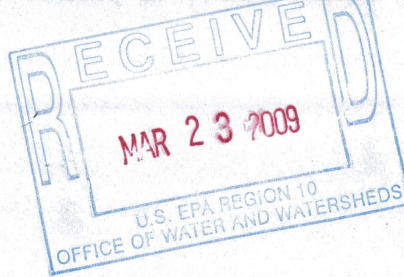
3000 Arctic Boulevard • Anchorage, Alaska 99503-3898 • Telephone (907) 786-5502 • Fax (907) 562-3421  
<http://www.muni.org> • <http://www.awwu.biz>

Acting Mayor Matt Claman

## Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility

March 17, 2009

USEPA Region 10  
NPDES Permits Unit  
Attention: Lisa Olson, Permit Writer  
1200 Sixth Ave, OWW-130  
Seattle, WA 98101



Reference: ESA Review for NPDES Permit No. AK-002255-1  
John M. Asplund Water Pollution Control Facility  
Anchorage Alaska

Dear Ms. Olson:

Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU) is hereby requesting formal recognition as an "applicant" for the purposes of the anticipated interagency consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding reauthorization of the referenced permit and implications of the permit action on the endangered Cook Inlet beluga whale.

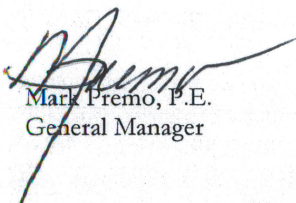
As you are aware, the Cook Inlet beluga whale was listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the Federal Register on October 22, 2008. The listing action requires Federal agencies, to consult with NMFS should an agency determine that its action may affect beluga whales or designated critical habitat. Critical habitat evaluation by NMFS is ongoing and is not expected to be finalized until October, 2009.

AWWU submitted the application for reauthorization of the NPDES permit in early 2005. We understand that agency review of the permit application will be taking place over the next six months. AWWU requests that early consultation with NMFS and EPA take place as appropriate to assist EPA in making the determination of the potential for an effect on the Cook Inlet beluga whale. As an applicant, we ask that we have the opportunity to participate in the discussion. AWWU believes that information we have collected concerning the water quality, hydrography, and circulation of Cook Inlet could be useful in development of the critical habitat evaluation and/or recovery plan for the whales. Furthermore, we are available to assist EPA in preparing its ESA-required biological assessment.

We ask that we be apprised of any formal consultation that may take place between agencies, including dates and timelines for preparation of a biological opinion by NMFS, if required. We also ask to review and comment on the draft biological opinion during the formal consultation process, should that be necessary. We are open to communications on any related topic, and we encourage contacting us directly as questions arise. Our lead contact for Cook Inlet beluga whale issues will be Brett Jokela, Assistant General Manager, 907-786-5511, or [brett.jokela@awwu.biz](mailto:brett.jokela@awwu.biz).

We look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,



Mark Premo, P.E.  
General Manager

*Community, Security, Prosperity*